The Saints Protested Against The Popes Long Before The Protestant Reformation

This Roman Catholic Beliefs study shows how the saints where protesting against the Popes of Rome long before the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century.

Some Catholics proclaim that the protests against the Popes started with the Protestant Reformation, and that the Protestant Churches aren't legitimate because they came after the Roman Church.

> But that is misleading, as there was no reason for the saints to protest against the Popes until they ascended to power and started teaching concepts which are contrary to Scripture.

The power of the Popes reached a pinnacle in the 12th through 15th centuries, as they attained: independent sovereignty, absolute supremacy over the Christian Church, and full control of the princes of Europe.

> Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) said "*We may according to the fullness of our power, dispose of the law and dispense above the law. Those whom the Pope of Rome doth separate, it is not a man that separates them but God. For the Pope holdeth place on earth, not simply of a man but of the true God*." (Source: "Decretals of Greogory IX," Book 1, chapter 3.)

He was the "*most powerful of all the Popes*." He claimed to be "*Vicar of Christ*," "*Vicar of God*," and "*Supreme Sovereign over the Church and the World*." He claimed the right to depose Kings and Princes; and that "*All things on earth and in Heaven and in Hell — are subject to the Vicar of Christ*."

> He brought the Church into supreme control of the State. The Kings of Germany, France, England, and practically all the Monarchs of Europe,

> obeyed his will. He even brought the Byzantine Empire under his control. Never in history has any one man exerted more power!

Here are more quotes from Pope Innocent III, which caused the saints to protest against Him:

Pope Innocent III declared that nobody can be saved outside of His church and authority:

> *"With our hearts we believe and with our lips we confess but one Church, not that of the heretics, but the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church, outside which we believe that no one is saved."* (Denzinger 423)

Pope Innocent III prohibited the saints from having the Scriptures:

> "*We prohibit laymen possessing copies of the Old and New Testament. ...We forbid them most severely to have the above books in the popular vernacular*." (meaning in their country's native language, as the Papal Church only allowed their priests to read it in Latin). (Source: The Council of Toulouse, Canon 14)

Pope Innocent III proclaimed that if the saints believes were contrary to the Popes, then they should be burned to death:

> "*Anyone who attempts to construe a personal view of God which conflicts with* (Catholic) *church dogma must be burned without pity.*" (Source: Papal Bull, 1198 A.D.)

Pope Innocent IV convened the First Council of Lyons (1245). Issued the bull Ad extirpanda that permitted the torture of heretics (1252).

Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) issued Unam Sanctam (1302) which proclaimed papal supremacy and pushing it to its historical extreme.

Pope Boniface VIII proclaimed that salvation is only through the papacy.

> *"We declare, assert, define and pronounce to be subject to the Roman Pontiff is to every creature altogether necessary for salvation… I have the authority of the King of Kings. I am all in all, and above all, so that God Himself and I, the Vicar of Christ, have but one consistory, and I am able to do almost all that God can do. What therefore, can you make of me but God?"* (Papal bull Unam sanctam, 1302 A.D.)
>
> The bull ends, *"Furthermore, we declare, we proclaim, we define that it is absolutely necessary for salvation that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff."*

So the natural response of the saints to the blasphemous proclamations of the Popes, was to protest against them.

Arnulf (991), the Bishop of Orleans, proclaimed *the Pope as the Antichrist, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself as God.*

> "deplored the roman popes as "*monsters of guilt*" and declared in a council called by the King of France in 991 A.D. that the pontiff, clad in purple and gold, was, "*Antichrist, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself as God*." (Phillip Schaff, History of the Christian church, 8 vols., reprint of the 3d (1910)ed. (Grand Rapids Mich.: Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing Co., n.d.)

Gherbert of Rheims said that *the Pope was the antichrist sitting in the temple of God.*

Before the year 1000, Gherbert said of the pope sitting on his lofty throne in gold and purple, that if destitute of charity, he was antichrist sitting in the temple of God.

Berenger said *the Roman see to be not the apostolic seat, but the seat of Satan.*

In the eleventh century, referring to the Pope's enforcement at that time of the doctrine of transubstantiation, Berenger affirmed the Roman see to be not the apostolic seat, but the seat of Satan.

Eberhard II (1240), archbishop of Salzburg, affirmed that *the Pope was the*

antichrist.

> *"Stated at a synod of bishops held at Regensburg in 1240 that the people of his day were "accustomed" to calling the pope antichrist."* (LeRoy Edwin Froom, The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers)

The early witnesses were people groups called the Albigenses and Waldenses (called Vaudois in French).

> God had entrusted them with preserving His Holy Word, which is why the Papal Church persecuted them so relentlessly.

The Albigenses called the Church of Rome the *whore of Babylon*.

In the sunny south of France, in Provence and Catalonia, lived the Albigenses, who were bible-believing followers of Christ.

The Albigensian Christians preached against the immoralities of the Roman Catholic priesthood, pilgrimages, worship of saints and idols, opposed the (pompous and pretentious) claims of the Church of Rome; and made great use of the Scriptures. By 1167 they (the Albigensian Christians) were a majority of the population of South France.

> The Albigenses "*All agreed in regarding the Church of Rome as having absolutely perverted Christianity, and in maintaining that it was she who was designated in the Apocalypse by the name of the whore of Babylon.*"

Rome could not endure this testimony; she drew her deadly sword and waged war against those who bore it. The Albigensian Crusade (1209–1229) was a 20-year military campaign initiated by Pope Innocent III to eliminate the Albigenses in the south of France.

In 1229 – The Roman Catholic Inquisition executed 32,000 Bible-believing Albigensian Christians at Toulouse, France – and confiscated all their property!

> By the time the Roman Catholic armies finished these "crusades", almost the entire population of southern France (mostly Albigensian Christians)

had been exterminated.

The Waldenses called the Roman Church the *harlot of Babylon*, and the Papacy, the "*man of sin*" and "*antichrist*".

Peter Waldo (1140-1218) was a rich merchant of Lyons, France, who gave up everything to preach the Gospel. Waldo's followers called themselves "*the Poor in Spirit*".

> The Waldensians were orthodox in their beliefs, but they were outside of the organizational structure of the Roman Catholic Church. They traveled in pairs, preaching the Gospel. They were humble people who believed in "apostolic poverty". They were barefoot, owning nothing, and they shared all things in common.

They were considered to be a threat because they set standards which made many members of the Catholic clergy look bad by comparison. In 1184, Pope Lucius III excommunicated Waldo and his followers.

They were students of prophecy from the oldest times. In the book of Waldensian Pastor Leger called "*Treatise on Antichrist*" written in 1120, said "*That treatise brands the Romish Church as the harlot Babylon, and the Papacy as the "man of sin" and antichrist*."

> Waldensian Reinerius Saccho asserted "*that the Romish church is not the church of Jesus Christ, but a church of malignants and that it apostatized under Sylvester—and that the Church of Rome is the harlot in the apocalypse*." (The Testimony of The Reformers, E. Bickersteth, 1836, p. 46 from the Testimony of Reinerius Saccho, in 1254)

That was the faith and confession of the Waldenses, for which they were killed by the Papal Church.

> "*Whereupon we, with all our posterity, have to understand what be the reasons and arguments wherewith the antichrist of Rome is wont to uphold the impious seat of his abomination; who now is come to such excess and profundity of all kinds of iniquity, that all justice, equity, and*

> *verity being set aside, he seeketh the defence of his cause by no other thing than only by force and violence, terror and oppression, and shedding of blood*." Foxes Book of Martyrs: The Waldensian martyrs in Provence

Where not a few persons, but whole villages and townships, with the most part of all the aforesaid country, both men, women, and children, were put to all kinds of cruelty, and suffered martyrdom for the profession of the gospel.

The history of the persecutions and wars against the people called Waldenses or Waldois, in the valleys of Angrogne, Lucerne, St. Martin, Perouse, and others, in the country of Piedmont, from A.D. 1555, to A.D. 1561.

> "*For who would ever have judged or suspected in his mind, that the bishop of Rome (commonly received, and believed, almost of all men, to be the vicar and vicegerent of Christ here in earth) to be antichrist, and the great adversary of God, whom St. Paul so expressly prophesieth of, in these latter days to be revealed by the brightness of the Lord's coming, as all men now, for the most part, may see it is come to pass?*" Foxes Book of Martyrs: The Waldensian martyrs of Peidmont

Michal of Cesena declared *the Church of Rome to be the Whore of Babylon.*

Michal (1270-1342) who came out of the Franciscan Order of the Catholic Church declared the Pope "*to be Antichrist, and the church of Rome to be the whore of Babylon, drunk with the blood of the saints*." Foxes Book of Martyrs, op cit., p. 445

John Wycliffe said *Antichrist, the head of all these evil men, is the pope of Rome.*

John, (1330-1384), called the *Morning Star of the Reformation*, spent most of his life teaching at Oxford University and was recognized by John of Guant (The Duke of Lancaster) as extraordinarily gifted in theology. He translated the Latin Vulgate Bible into English and placed it in the hands of the people.

Wycliffe said of the Pope:

> "*When the western church was divided for about 40 years between two rival popes, one in Rome and the other in Avigon, France, each pope*

> *called the other pope antichrist – and John Wycliffe is reputed to have regarded them as both being right: "two halves of Antichrist, making up the perfect Man of Sin between them*."

> "*We suppose that Antichrist, the head of all these evil men, is the pope of Rome*." (Ibid, p. 90)

40 years after his death the Roman Catholic Church dug up his bones and had them burned and the ashes were thrown into the river.

Walter Brute was martyred for saying *the Pope is the Antichrist.*

Walter was a noted scholar, prophetic expositor and associate of Wycliffe.

> In 1391 he was accused of saying *the pope is antichrist, and a seducer of the people, and utterly against the law and life of Christ*, and he was killed for his testimony

http://www.exclassics.com/foxe/foxe84.htm

Matthias of Janow said *the Pope is the most wicked Christian, falsely styling himself by that name.*

Matthias was a fourteenth-century Bohemian ecclesiastical writer. Matthias came to be known as the Bohemian Wycliffe. He received his doctorate from the University of Paris and in 1381 became the canon in the Cathedral of Prague. His writings paved the way for the Hussite movement.

Janow based his conclusions about the Antichrist on II Thessalonians 2, Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 and 17. Here is one of his statements:

> *"The Antichrist has already come. He is neither Jew, pagan Saracean nor worldly tyrant, but the 'man who opposes Christian truth and the Christian life by way of deception;—he is, and will be, the most wicked Christian, falsely styling himself by that name, assuming the highest station in the church, and possessing the highest consideration, arrogating dominion over all ecclesiastics and laymen;' one who, by the*

> *working of Satan, assumes to himself power and wealth and honor, and makes the church, with its goods and sacraments, subservient to his own carnal ends*." Froom, PFF, volume 2, p. 40.

John Purvey said *the Papacy was the kingdom of the Antichrist.*

John (1354 – 1414) was one of the leading followers of the English theologian and reformer John Wycliffe during the late fourteenth and early.

> Luther said "*We are not the first who interpret the Papacy as the kingdom of Antichrist…He* (John Purvey in 1390 AD) *rightly and truly pronounces the Pope "Antichrist" as he is…a witness indeed, foreordained by God to confirm our doctrine*." (Martin Luther, Commentarius in Apocalypsin reprint).

Sir John Oldcastle, a follower of Wycliffe, proclaimed *the Pope as the great Antichrist, the Son of Perdition, the open Adversary of God, and the Abomination standing in the holy place.*

John (died in 1417) was an English Lollard leader, who was also known as Lord Cobham, was knight of Herefordshire, and a prominent follower of Wycliffe. He unequivocally stated:

> *"But as touching the Pope and his Spirituality, I owe them neither suit nor service, for so much as I know him by the Scriptures to be the great Antichrist, the Son of Perdition, the open Adversary of God, and the Abomination standing in the holy place*."(Froom, PFF, volume 2, p. 88.)

Being a friend of Henry V, he long escaped prosecution for heresy.

> He spoke of the Pope in these words: "*I know him by the scriptures to be the great Antichrist, the son of Perdition… Rome is the very nest of Antichrist, and out of that nest come all the disciples of him.*" Guinness, op. cit., p. 134

When convicted, he escaped from the Tower of London and then led a rebellion

against the King. Eventually, he was captured and executed in London. For his testimony King Henry V had him “hanged up by the middle, in chains of iron, and so consumed alive in the fire, praising the name of God as long as his life lasted.”(Ibid., pp. 636-641)

William White said that *the pope… is nothing else but a devilish estate and heavy yoke of antichrist, and therefore he is an enemy unto Christ’s truth.*

William was a follower of John Wycliffe, and he was well learned, upright, and a well-spoken priest.

> *“That the wicked living of the pope, and his holiness, is nothing else but a devilish estate and heavy yoke of antichrist, and therefore he is an enemy unto Christ’s truth*.”

John Huss proclaimed *the Antichrist has been revealed in the Pope* for which he was burned to death.

John Huss (a.k.a. Jan Huss, 1372-1415) was a well-educated man from Bohemia, who came under the influence of Wycliffe’s writings, which caused him to break with the church of Rome.

A reformation sprang up in Southern Bohemia, a province in NW Africa, more than a century before the time of Luther, and was quenched in seas of blood. What gave rise to it? The testimonies of John Huss and Jerome of Prague. His followers became known as Hussites.

He referred to the Antichrist as the enemy of the Church – not as a Jew, a pagan, or a Turk(Muslim) – but as a false confessor of the name of Christ.

> *“Surely even at this day is the malice, the abomination, and filthiness of ANTICHRIST revealed in the pope…*”

> *“The Pope is … the true Antichrist, of whom it is written, that he sitteth in the temple of God, among the people where Christ is worshiped…*”

> *“I trust in God that He will send after me those that shall be more*

> *valiant; and there are alive at this day that shall make more manifest the malice of ANTICHRIST, and shall give their lives to the death for the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ*."

Among his dying words he proclaimed, "*In 100 years, God will raise up a man whose calls for reform cannot be suppressed.*"

The name "Huss" meant goose in the Bohemian language, and he said "*This day ye are burning a goose; but from my ashes will arise a swan, which ye will not be able to roast*."

> Almost exactly 100 years later, in 1517, Martin Luther nailed his famous 95 Theses of Contention (a list of 95 issues of heretical theology and crimes of the Roman Catholic Church) onto the church door at Wittenberg. The prophecy of John Hus had come true!

He was condemned as a Heretic by the Catholic Church and was burned to death by a bonfire made up of his books on July 6, 1415. He died singing to the Lord. His ashes were gathered and cast into the nearby Rhine River.

Jerome of Prague was burned at the stake for his testimony against the Roman Catholic Church.

Jerome of Prague (Jeroným Pražský in Czech, 1379 – 30 May 1416) was a Czech church reformer and one of the chief followers of Jan Hus who was burned for heresy at the Council of Constance.

> The Roman Catholic Church accused him of the following: 1. That he was a derider of the papal dignity. 2. An opposer of the pope. 3. An enemy to the cardinals. 4. A persecutor of the prelates. 5. A hater of the Christian religion.

In going to the place of execution he sang several hymns, and when he came to the spot, which was the same where Huss had been burnt, he knelt down, and prayed fervently. He embraced the stake with great cheerfulness, and when they went behind him to set fire to the fagots, he said, "*Come here, and kindle it before my eyes; for if I had been afraid of it, I had not come to this place*." The fire being kindled, he sang a hymn, but was soon interrupted by the flames; and the last

words he was heard to say these, "*This soul in flames I offer Christ, to Thee*."

John Purvey rightly and truly pronounced *the Pope as Antichrist.*

John (1354-1428), who was a close associate of John Wycliffe, published a commentary on the Apocalypse in 1390 based on Wycliffe's sermons.

> Over one hundred years later, a copy of this book came into the hands of Martin Luther who was so impressed by it that he reprinted it in Wittenberg in 1528 describing it as "*a Commentary on the Apocalypse Written 100 Years Ago*."

Purvey's Commentarius in Apocalypsin [Commentary on the Apocalypse] was prefaced by this impressive statement by Martin Luther:

> *"This preface, noble reader, you may understand was written by us for this reason—that we might make known to the world that we are not the first who interpret the Papacy as the kingdom of Antichrist. For many years prior to us, so many and so great men (whose number is large, and their memory eternal) have attempted this so clearly and openly, and that with great spirit and force, that [those] who were driven by the fury of the papal tyranny into the farthest boundaries of the earth, and suffering the most atrocious tortures, nevertheless bravely and faithfully persisted in the confession of the truth. Although we in this age are far more learned and free than they, yet we ought to be ashamed that they, held in great barbarity and captivity, were so much braver and bolder than we in spirit and fortitude*."
>
> "*For as this author was, for his age (as I think), among the first who sought learning and holiness most ardently, yet hindered by the defectiveness of the time and the reign of darkness could neither speak these things so purely nor think so clearly as in this our age we speak and think, yet he rightly and truly pronounces the Pope Antichrist, (as he is). . ..a witness, indeed, foreordained by God to confirm our doctrine*." Froom, PFF, volume 2, pp. 94-95.

William Tyndale said *the Pope is the antichrist and his doctrine sprung of the devil.*

William Tyndale (1493-1536) was an English scholar who became a leading figure in Protestant Reformation in the years leading up to his execution.

Tyndale translated the Greek Bible into English, but the Roman Catholic Church fought against him publishing it. The Catholic church believed that only the mother church is able to rightly interpret the Bible.

> During a dinner meeting among priests and bishops where Tyndale was present, he said that he "*defied the Pope and all his laws*" and vowed that "*a plough-boy would know more of the Scriptures than they*".

Tyndale said of the Pope;

> "*The pope's forbidding matrimony, and to eat of meats created of God for man's use, which is devilish doctrine by Paul's prophecy,... are tokens good enough that he is the right antichrist, and his doctrine sprung of the devil*." 1 Timothy 4:1-3 Tyndale, An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue, in Works, vol. 3, p.

> '*The Jews look for Christ, and he is come fifteen hundred years ago, and they not aware: we also have looked for antichrist, and he has reigned as long, and we not aware: and that because either of us looked carnally for him, and not in the place where we ought to have sought. The Jews had found Christ verily, if they had sought him in the law and the prophets, whither Christ sendeth them to seek. John v. We also had spied out antichrist long ago, if we had looked into the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, where, because the beast sees himself now to be sought for, he roars*.' (Ibid, p. 46)

Tyndale was caught, arrested, tried, and sentenced to death. While he was being tied at the stake, Tyndale prayed that the "eyes of the King would be opened."

> Here is William Tyndale tied to the stake to give his life for what he preached.
> After his death, the circulation of the English Bible providentially found its way into the hands of King Henry VIII. In seeing the masterful work

> done, Henry issued an edict that every church was to have one of these Bibles on display in their chapel. Henry did make one adjustment to the Bible, and that was the insertion of the header which pronounced him Defender of the Faith on the title page. Tyndale's prayer was heard.

Click here to read a Historical Witnesses Against Antichrist study which shows many more quotes from the Popes of Rome, which reveal why the saints protested against them.

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